



Office of Compliance

PRESS

Background Fact Sheet

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Basic Information on the Office of Compliance and the Congressional Accountability Act

The CAA

The Congressional Accountability Act (“CAA,” PL 104-1), enacted in 1995, was one of the first pieces of legislation passed by the 104th Congress. The CAA applies twelve civil rights, labor, and workplace safety laws to the U.S. Congress and certain Congressional agencies, requiring them to follow many of the same employment and workplace safety laws applied to businesses and the Federal Government. The CAA also established a dispute resolution procedure that emphasizes counseling and mediation for the resolution of disputes. The CAA only applies to the U.S. Congress.

Laws Applied to Congress by the CAA

- The Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967
- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Employee Polygraph Protection Act of 1988
- The Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938
- The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
- The Federal Service Labor-Management Relations Statute
- Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970
- The Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Veterans’ employment and reemployment rights at Chapter 43 of Title 38 of the U.S. Code
- The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act

The CAA was amended in 1998 to include certain provisions of the Veterans Employment Opportunities Act.

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Employees Covered by the CAA

The CAA protects over 30,000 employees of the Legislative Branch. Both current employees and job applicants are protected. In certain instances, former employees may also be covered.

Coverage extends to employees of the House of Representatives and the Senate (both Washington, D.C. and state district office staff); the Office of the Architect of the Capitol; the Capitol Guide Service; the Capitol Police; the Congressional Budget Office; the Office of the Attending Physician; and the Office of Compliance. Certain provisions of the CAA also apply to the Government Accountability Office (GAO, formerly General Accounting Office) and to the Library of Congress.

The Office of Compliance

The Office of Compliance is an independent agency established to administer and enforce the CAA. The Office of Compliance administers the dispute resolution system established to resolve disputes that arise under the CAA; carries out an education and training program for the regulated community on the rights and responsibilities of the CAA; and advises Congress on needed changes and amendments to the CAA. The General Counsel of the Office of Compliance has independent investigatory and enforcement authority for certain violations of the CAA.

The Office of Compliance has a five-member non-partisan Board of Directors appointed to five-year terms by the majority and minority leaders of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. The members of the Board of Directors come from across the United States and are chosen for their expertise in employment and labor law.

The Office of Compliance has four statutory employees appointed by the Board of Directors who carry out the day-to-day functions of the office, including an Executive Director, two Deputy Executive Directors, and a General Counsel. The office also employs education and communications staff, general administrative staff, and staff attorneys and safety and health inspectors who report to the General Counsel.